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indicates that in this field Syria has become a competitor in foreign markets. In dyeing, printing and finishing there seems to be need for additional modern plant. It also seems desirable to investigate the possibility of profitable production of jute fabric sacks. Imports of these sacks have rapidly increased in the last few years, reaching a total of nearly 10,000 tons with a value of £S 6 million in 1953. The need for jute sacks would be lessened if bulk transportation and storage facilities were available but even in that event an increase in general agricultural production might make the establishment of a factory for sack production from imported jute fiber or yarn an economic possibility.

Further expansion of the cement industry may well be required. In fact, the government has authorized a new plant for Aleppo which may be transferred to the Jezireh to serve the growing requirement of north-eastern Syria. A cement plant for the Homs-Hama region is also under consideration.

In the footwear industry modern factory production has been introduced only with regard to rubber boots and shoes. An experiment with factory production of leather shoes in Aleppo some years ago met with such opposition from the handicraft trade that it was abandoned. Nevertheless this branch of industry may be one in which the application of modern production methods would be appropriate and generally beneficial.

It seems useful to investigate the economic prospects of paper and paperboard manufacture. In 1953 about 8,000 tons of paper with a value of nearly £S 5 million were imported. This total comprises a large variety of different types of paper but some are imported in such quantity as to suggest the feasibility of specialized production. Straw is plentiful as raw material and in a relatively short period more poplar wood could become available if farmers and village communities gave increased attention to tree planting.

The production of metal from scrap and the gradual development of an engineering industry may also be contemplated. The manufacture of simple pumps and engines as well as spare parts is already being carried out by many small shops but the quality of the output suffers from inadequate technical supervision. An adequately equipped and staffed plant might be able to undertake the production of these items as well as the improved types of agricultural implements to be developed for use on farms.